

Correspondence

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Other Submissions

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Please fill out the following information to help us complete your filing:

Docket #: - - -

Subject: * Port MacKenzie Rail Extension
First Name: * David
Middle Name:
Last Name: * Wurts
Address: * 6404 Ross Rd

City: * Morrison
State: * CO
Zip Code: * 80465-
Email Address: * david.w.wurts@lmco.com
Group/Affiliation:
Message: March 3, 2008

RE: STB Finance Docket No. 35095 - Port MacKenzie Rail Scope of Study

To Whom It May Concern::

My wife and I own 29 acres of land in Willow where we are building our dream home. Recently the proposal to build the Port MacKenzie Rail Extension was brought to our attention through an electronic mailing from our membership with the Willow Dog Musers Association (WMDA). We were not informed of this proposal when we purchased the property in January 2006.

If the proposed railroad corridor were to happen as outlined in the Corridor 3 plan, it would drastically alter the essence of the area around the connection to the existing railroad for us and for our neighbors. The proposed tie-in to the existing railroad passes within 400??? feet of our property, making the noise and visual offensiveness of the suggested railroad addition a direct negative impact to our home.

We purchased the property unaware of this potential serious undesired change to the area. The seller was similarly uninformed about the project and was therefore unable to disclose any information. Knowledge of this potential impact to the property would have weighed heavily in our decision whether to buy the land.

Our excitement about living in Willow is now overshadowed by the threat of a complete loss of privacy and tranquility because of the potential railroad corridor. We foresee a large loss of property value if the corridor goes through as our quiet woods of birch and white spruce would not offer protection from the spur and connection to the existing railroad line.

Willow is now the premier dogsledding town of the borough. It seems that Wasilla has

become too populated to support teams of dogs in the newly suburbanized areas. Willow continues to draw Iditarod mushers to the area because of the exceptional trail system and access to Alaska's premier wilderness. The proposed corridor will directly affect the mushers in the area; and my wife and I are dog drivers who chose to buy land in Willow with our intentions of running dogs. Now the very trails that we sought out are threatened by this proposed corridor.

We strongly oppose the proposed Corridor 3 layout, particularly the location chosen to connect the new line to the existing railroad north of Fishhook Road. Please keep us residents in mind whose entire Alaska experience could be ruined by an attempt to improve the convenience of people who live miles from the project site. I think that an alternate spot could be found to tie in to the existing rail line without as much harm to the local community. We have found the perfect location for our retirement home for the next 40 years, but that idyllic future would be greatly compromised by Corridor 3.

Thank you for the opportunity to comment on one of your planning corridor proposals. As a legal homeowner in the borough, please add us to any mailing distributions concerning plans directly affecting Willow. The Mat-Su Assessors Office has our information on record, but it is included below for your convenience.

Respectfully submitted,

David Wurts and TC Wait
Owners of Willow lot 20N04W30C013
Current address:
6404 Ross Rd
Morrison, CO 80465